

Abraham Lincoln

Address by

FRANCIS W. SHEPARDSON







DR FRANCIS W SHEPARDSON

THE GRAND ARMY HALL

AND

MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

LINCOLN BIRTHDAY SERVICE

IN MEMORIAL HALL

ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY THE TWELFTH
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN
AT THREE O'CLOCK P. M.

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INVOCATION.

REV. GILBERT W. LAIDLAW.

O Lord, our Governor, who in the former time didst lead our Fathers forth into a wealthy place, giving them the mind and will to establish a nation with liberty and justice for foundations; and who in a later day didst raise up a host of men who counted their lives as nought if only our country's unity and honor might be preserved; for all these we give thee praise and thanks. And especially do we bless thy holy name for him whom we hold in grateful remembrance this day. For his humbleness and unselfishness, for his piety and lowliness of heart, for his trust in thee, his God, and his faith in his fellow men, for his far seeing statesmanship and his incomparable patriotism, and for his undying example of true and answering devotion to this our beloved country we give thee humble thanks. And we pray thee that keeping in constant remembrance all that thou gavest to us in him, we may do our part in our day and time to maintain the place and honor of our dear land amongst the nations of the earth and bequeath to our children a nation worthy of thy continued favor and meet to do thy will in setting forward and advancing the cause of liberty, righteousness and truth throughout the world. All which we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT KOCH.

Ladies, Gentlemen and Comrades:

On behalf of the Grand Army Hall and Memorial Association, I bid you welcome to this gathering. I thank you for joining with us in celebrating the 106th birthday of Abraham Lincoln.

This form of commemorating the birthday of Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated by our Association at the instance of my distinguished predecessor in office, General Robbins, in 1900. That year we had the felicity of having with us Dr. William Jayne, of Springfield, the lifetime personal friend of Mr. Lincoln, who spoke to us from the personal standpoint. Today you will have the pleasure of listening to the 15th annual oration upon the theme of Abraham Lincoln, which although it may be the old, old story, seems to be a new one each time it is presented to our ears.

We feel sure that you all came here more especially to listen to the words of the orator of the day, and not to any extended remarks from the President of the Association. Nevertheless, as the committee has seen fit to place him on the program for some remarks, he seems in duty bound to say a few words.

The ground upon which we meet was peculiarly connected with the greatest life-work of President Lincoln. Fifty-four years ago it was known as Dearborn Park—but a park it was only in name. When war had waged its wide desolation for some time, the good people, especially the women, of this city instituted here upon this ground the Sanitary Fair—an institution which provided for the soldiers in the field all sorts of comforts not furnished by the Government,

and especially vegetables. A little later it became, and remained throughout the war, the local habitation of the Christian Commission, who made this ground a place for homelike comfort and rest for soldiers who were coming from the front disabled, and returning to the field after recovery. This property finally having come into the control of the Grand Army Memorial Hall Association, it became possible to the City of Chicago to erect this splendid Library, in exchange for a lease for fifty years to this Association, securing to it free occupancy and maintenance of the rooms in which you are now meeting.

Yonder stood the Grand Central depot of the Illinois Central, Michigan Central and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroads. From there the troops of Northern Iowa and Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin were sent to the front, to the South, to the East and to the West. This was a veritable centre of activity in support of the great War President. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers passed through this gate-way in response to the call of Father Abraham, and tens of thousands of our erring brothers of the South came through it on the road to the prison cantonment of Camp Douglas, on Cottage Grove Avenue between 31st and 35th Streets.

Cook County and the City of Chicago was the place of formation and training of scores of regiments of Illinois troops, who went to the front cheerfully, numbering thousands, and returned through the same gate-way in groups of a few hundred. When they came back they brought with them the gift of a re-united country—a nation established—that has prospered beyond all other nations during fifty years of peace,

which their service and sacrifice, encouraged by the smiles of the women and their sympathy and tears as well, had achieved.

Probably no community, no city in the country, profited more richly from this restoration than the city of Chicago. Nearly every city, and most counties, all over this country, have erected monuments in commemoration of their soldiers' and sailors' services. Where in this broad city is there any visible sign that this metropolis of wealth is perpetuating this service and this sacrifice of loyal men and women? Where is it? In my mind's eye I see a great building, conceived by a great sculptor, an artist, extolling the victories, the virtues and the blessings of peace, by commemorating and preserving forever in granite and bronze the deeds of the men and women of Cook County, who through war and carnage, suffering and privation, gave to our people peace and prosperity. This must be incorporated in the grand scheme of the future Chicago beautiful and the place for such a temple of peace—is right across the way to the east.

And now I take great pleasure in introducing to you Professor Shepardson, the orator of the day.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: AN INTERPRETATION.

Address before the Lincoln Memorial Association,
Chicago, Illinois, February 12, 1915.

BY FRANCIS W. SHEPARDSON.

"Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour.
But at length silence comes:
These are all gone, and standing, like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame;
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American."

By what standard shall an individual be measured?
In accordance with what principle shall the people of
a republic estimate their leaders? Of what worth is
any individual when viewed in the light of the cen-
turies?

The statisticians tell us that the new year, 1915,
marked the time when the population of the United
States had reached 100,000,000; when, counting our
dependencies, there were a hundred and ten million
souls under the flag of our nation. They declare that
there are 1,747,000,000 inhabitants of the globe.

In a striking paragraph in one of his philosophical
essays John Fiske, speaking of the divergence of man
from an earlier type, says:

"It is not likely that less than a million years have
elapsed since the first page of this new chapter in the
history of creation was opened: it is probable that the
time has been much longer. In comparison with such
a period, the whole recorded duration of human his-
tory sinks into nothingness. The pyramids of Egypt
seem like things of yesterday when we think of the

Cave-man of western Europe in the glacial period who scratched pictures of mammoths on pieces of reindeer antler with a bit of pointed flint."

And man, he continues, lived ages before that who left no written trace.

Bryant phrases another great thought in familiar words from "Thanatopsis":

" . . . All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there!
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep,—the dead reign there alone!"

Again from the past ring out the wondering words of the ancient poet and dreamer of Israel, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou art mindful of him?"

The thoughts inspired by such passages are appalling; they are depressing; unless into the human heart there steals the sweet comfort from the Prince of Peace:

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Human sentiment loves to cherish memories of great individuals. "The deepest affections of our hearts gather round some human form in which are incarnated the living thoughts and ideas of the passing age." So history has largely been made up of the

achievements of individuals, and yet most of the individuals have been lost in the mass. Only a few are recalled.

You remember the story of the sunken road at Waterloo; how the first line disappeared, then the second, then the third and so on until the road was filled with bodies over which those in the rear went forward to glory. That has been the fate of the overwhelming majority of mankind.

Here and there a figure stands out prominently. Perhaps it is that of one distinguished for military prowess, an Alexander or a Caesar. Or of one noted for faithfulness to duty. Have you ever thought of the many thousands of women who must have lived in the ancient empire of the Medes and Persians? Except for Vashti their names are all forgotten while the world cherishes the memory of Esther and passes on the question of her uncle which nerved her to duty, "Who knoweth whether thou art called to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Or, again, it is an individual famed for tenderness and affection. How the sweet story of Ruth grips the imagination!

"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried."

It may be some one having great constructive power, like Alexander Hamilton, of whom it was said that "his original conceptions had the hardihood of finished pictures." Sometimes, in strange contrast, the remembered individual may be one noted for cruelty and oppression, like a Nero, or, far more pleasing, one recalled for his honesty and integrity, like George Washington.

As Professor Barrett Wendell has strikingly phrased it:

“Posterity will judge; that is certain. It will judge, too, with unthinking impartiality, without acrimony, without tenderness. What mankind wants or needs it will preserve and remember; what mankind finds useless it will cast aside and forget. That is what makes the past seem heroic to all eyes not unduly sharpened by the engines of science. ‘It is the sin and the tumult and the passion of human life that die. Enshrined in art the beauty of the old days lives, and it will live forever.’ And even though science nowadays teaches us the suggestive truth that the old days which we have revered were after all, when the sun still shone upon them, days of turbulence and wickedness disheartening as any that surges about us now, that same science, one often thinks, is prone to forget the deep law of human nature which makes each generation, in the end, remember instinctively of those that are gone before only or chiefly those traits and deeds which shall add to the wisdom and power of humanity.”

What is the source of individual power? Lowell makes a suggestion in the case of Abraham Lincoln in his familiar lines:

“Nature, they say, doth dote,
And can not make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.”

No! That will not explain Abraham Lincoln. Long ago the sneering question was asked, “Can any good

come out of Nazareth?" Yes; if behind the little family of Nazareth there is a long genealogical line running back into the centuries. "Can any good come out of Bethlehem?" Yes; if one observes in the halo that surrounds the infant child the reflection of the glory of God. One must go far back in order to find the source of human power. Some one has said:

"There is an old tradition among the people of Italy that men who were producing some of the finest violins made in the olden time sought for wood with which to manufacture those great instruments in the mountain cottages, choosing those that had been inhabited for generations by the happiest people of earth, families who had been noted for love and song and story. The thought of these violin makers was that the rafters of such a cottage had listened to the love songs of young people, to the lullabies of mothers rocking their children, to the joyful songs of fathers in happy, contented homes, and they believed that, in the wooden beams and rafters of such cottage homes, had been absorbed some of the sweetness that they had listened to all those years, and that it could be transmitted to the delicate instruments they were making, and so they sought far and near for these embodiments of human tenderness."

Wordsworth gives us an idea in his famous lines:
"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The soul that riseth in us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar."

And so, in order to understand Abraham Lincoln, it is necessary to go far from Illinois, far from the cradle in the log cabin in Kentucky. We are back in old England, looking up the long street to the majestic cathedral of Lincoln. We are not far from Scrooby, whence the Pilgrims came. Near by is Epworth, the home of early Methodism. Over yonder is Gains-

borough, out of which the Baptist movement started.

When Edward Eggleston determined to write the story of our country, he went back to Scrooby, in order to get personal impressions of the cradle of the Pilgrims. He has told us of his deep disappointment:

" . . . the traveler turns away at length from the rustic folk of Austerfield and the beer-drinkers over their mugs in the inn at Bawtry, and the villagers at Scrooby, benumbed by that sense of utter common-placeness which is left on the mind of a stranger by such an agricultural community. The Pilgrims, then, concerning whom poems have been written, and in whose honor orations without number have been made, were just common country folk like these, trudging through wheat-fields and along the muddy clay high-ways of the days of Elizabeth and James."

And then, as if unwilling to leave with such a thought, he exclaims:

"They were just such men as these and they were not. They were such as these would be if they were vivified by enthusiasm."

"Vivified by enthusiasm!" That is the phrase which explains many a migration in the early American colonial period. They determined, in the sight of God, to leave the old home for the new. But no one has ever told us exactly the cost of that decision. Over there is the church-yard where the members of the family lie buried. There are the familiar hills and valleys of childhood. There are the spots they have learned to love. Over yonder, across the trackless sea is the new land, a place of uncertainty and mystery. To leave the old and seek the new cost something. We can never understand what American history means, unless we appreciate what American history cost.

Through four or five generations of the Lincoln

family this pioneer spirit was manifested. For careful students have pictured for us "an American migration" which carried the Lincolns from Hingham, Massachusetts, to New Jersey, from New Jersey to Pennsylvania, from Pennsylvania to Virginia, from Virginia to the new settlements across the Alleghenies. You recall the sad story of the death of the pioneer Abraham Lincoln. Working in his frontier field he fell a victim to the savages from the forest. You remember how the son Mordecai ran to the cabin to get the trusty rifle. You see the all too familiar pioneer picture of the Indian with upraised hatchet about to sink the rude weapon into the skull of the brother. What destiny awaits that rifle ball! Shoot straight now, Mordecai! for if you miss, Thomas Lincoln will not grow up to marry Nancy Hanks and become the father of one who is to be the saviour of a great race of mankind!

What influences, do you think, came into American life because of such pioneer experiences? What was the effect upon those hardy men and women of the unceasing toil, of the anxious watching of the leafy forest out of which, at any moment, might come destruction and death? What was the influence upon a woman's life of the loneliness and desolation of the frontier? How was a boy's career affected by the hardships of poverty in the cabin home? What tremendous significance lies in the words:

"Oh Truth, Oh Freedom, how are ye still born,

In the rude cradle, in the manger nurst!

What humble hands unbar those gates of morn

Through which the splendors of the new day burst!"

Heredity, environment, training, all three of these must be considered when one attempts to interpret the character of Abraham Lincoln. And when his life is studied another word is found, mastery; and that, I take it, is the key to the whole strange career.

“And so he came, from prairie cabin up to capital.
One fire was in his spirit, one resolve—
To strike the stroke that rounds the perfect star.
The grip that swung the ax on Sangamon
Was on the pen that spelled Emancipation.
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow,
The conscience of him testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.”

In his training, first of all, he trained his body. He did not know it at the time, but the hardships of his boyhood and youth proved a great blessing to him in later years when he had to bear on his broad shoulders the burdens of a troubled nation. If the open-faced cabin had no comforts, at least it made for strength. The famous ax cut the fence rails which played so spectacular a part in political campaigns, but it also gave him powerful muscles. He was fond of wrestling and the stories tell us he always won. He found one of the happiest experiences of his whole life in that primitive election to a captaincy in the Black Hawk War, when his wrestling companions stood by his side in indication of their desire that he should lead them to the field.

It was his physical strength which brought him the chance to go down to New Orleans with one of the rude boats used to carry produce to that distant port. You remember how two incidents of that hard trip impressed him deeply. One was the sight of a slave gang. As he saw men and women linked together by bands of iron something seemed to burn into his soul. As, with John Hanks, he visited the slave market, saw men and women, boys and girls, sold like cattle, heard the rude words of the buyers and watched them examine the human chattels on the block, he is said to have exclaimed, as he hurried out into the

clear sunlight, "John, if I ever get a chance to hit that institution, I'll hit it hard, by the Eternal God!" If the story be taken as true, it must have seemed like a mocking fancy. The friendless country boy from Illinois apparently had small chance to "hit" an institution whose supporters controlled the national congress, determined who should be president of the country, and dominated by fear the principal newspapers of the land.

They say that he used to like to show his giant strength by going into the fields to swing the cradle in the days before the reaper came in to lighten the toil of the farmer. And few ever doubted that his training of the body in the hard tasks he had to bear was an important factor in the preparation for the later duties which it fell to his lot to perform.

But Lincoln early began to realize that there was something higher than mere brute strength; that he needed training of the mind.

If there ever was an American leader with a poor intellectual equipment, Lincoln was the man. As the family moved about from one place to another, there was little opportunity for him to go to school. He used to say that all his schooling did not amount to more than one year's training. But he walked many miles to borrow a grammar in order that he might improve his speech. He read eagerly every book he could find. It is a familiar picture which shows the boy with his feet against a tree poring over some treasured volume. Those who hired him sometimes complained that he used to interfere with the working of the hands by mounting a stump to make a speech to them. One writer describes with admiration a style-forming method due to the use of a shingle for his composition-book, whittling off the shingle when it was all written over, learning in this painstaking

manner to be cautious and economical in his use of words.

His earlier speeches strike one as rhetorical. Some are imitations of the efforts of others. And, from early boyhood, he was known as a clever mimic. But, as the years go by, his polished sentences and straightforward paragraphs, begin to mark him as one of the greatest orators of the new world. Take three of these as illustrations.

It is the eleventh day of February in 1861. A company of neighbors and friends have gathered in the old depot at Springfield to say goodbye to the man who has been chosen president of the United States at a great crisis in national history. In the gently falling mist, half-rain, half-snow, as the conductor is about to pull the bell-rope as a signal to the engineer, their old comrade speaks:

"My friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of these people I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine being who ever attended him, I can not succeed. With that assistance I can not fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

Some people declare that Lincoln was an atheist or was not a Christian, because he never joined the church. No one could ever make me believe that a man was an

atheist who could make a speech like that to those neighbors who knew him and trusted him, and would understand the hypocrisy of it all unless he spoke from the heart.

When he stood before the people at Washington to make his inaugural address and to declare the policy of his administration, he stated his position plainly, the position he had taken from the beginning, the position of the party which had elected him. But, as if unwilling to leave the slightest doubt of his attitude, again from the heart he gave expression to classic words:

"I am loathe to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone over all this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

You have just heard read again the Gettysburg Address. Did you think that Lincoln was the Gettysburg orator? Oh no; the Gettysburg orator was Edward Everett, the greatest of American orators of the day. He had gone up and down throughout the country, delivering his masterful speech, "Washington, the Beacon Light," in city after city, working to raise funds to erect the mighty sky-piercing shaft at the capital which was designed to show to the world American appreciation of the Father of his Country. No more graceful or polished orator could have been chosen for the dedicatory address of the cemetery on that decisive battlefield.

Few remember that he was the principal speaker of the day. No one recalls a word of the finished address he delivered. But all the world knows of the

brief utterance whose pregnant sentences still ring in your ears. Abraham Lincoln's words have burned themselves into the heart of the American people:

"The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Successful as he was, however, as a student in the school of experience, in which he had trained his body and his mind, Abraham Lincoln realized that there was something higher than body and mind. That was the soul. And no one can go far in study of Lincoln without discovering the great soul of the man. The stories illustrating this are many.

When a lad, he saw boys put a burning coal on the back of a turtle. That incident led him to write a little paper on the subject of cruelty to animals.

He did not have an abundant wardrobe. On one occasion as he was riding on the circuit with other lawyers, dressed in his best clothes, he was attracted by the sight of a distressed sow, one of whose pigs was caught in the mire. As he stopped his horse to go to its rescue, his companions ridiculed him but he persisted in his purpose. Then, with boots and clothes muddy, he went on his way, remarking, "I don't think I should have slept well, thinking of that poor old sow on the bank."

A heart like that surely would respond to the cry of the weeping mother who came to him during the war, saying, "They are going to shoot my boy at sunrise tomorrow." "But he slept at his post, when he should have been guarding his sleeping comrades." "But he's the only boy I have!" So again and again, on such appeals the great-hearted president suspended sentences, interfered with military rules, provoked the officials. But the people love him because of the tenderness of his soul.

No finer illustration could be found in any literature of the completeness of the training of mind and of soul than the immortal letter which Abraham Lincoln sent to Mrs. Bixby. It bears repetition at every meeting like this:

"Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement to the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I can not refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and the lost and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom. Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

"A. Lincoln."

Now at last, after having hardened his body and prepared his mind and trained his soul, our hero is ready in the nation's crisis. The American people must choose their king, the man to lead them in the hour of trial. There are many who passed in review.

There was the dashing Fremont, candidate of the Republican party in its first campaign, who came so near victory as the young men of the land rallied about his shining standard.

There was the brilliant statesman and orator from New York, the apostle of the "higher law," the proclaimer of the "irrepressible conflict," the thoroughly equipped leader with many a successful political struggle behind him.

There was the highly educated Chase, dignified, scholarly, masterful, fit to serve the people in the highest position.

There was Cameron of Pennsylvania, backed by wealth and family rank, filled with ambition and supported by powerful interests.

There was Charles Sumner, the distinguished orator from Massachusetts, typifying all for which New England had stood.

All the world knows what happened; how the people chose Abraham Lincoln; how in that critical hour he became the president of the United States.

Let us stop just for a moment, as he is about to enter the White House, from which he will issue a proclamation that will lead a great people out of the house of bondage, to catch with him a fleeting glimpse in fancy of the old cabin home, of the puncheon table before the fire-place, by the side of which his mother sat and told her listening son the story of Moses of old.

The key to his life was mastery. Alonzo Rothchild has told the story in his stirring volume, "Lincoln, Master of Men." One by one the leaders of the day came under his dominant control.

Colonel McClure indicates how it was done, in his account of his own surrender to this powerful personality:

"I went directly from the depot to Lincoln's house and rang the bell, which was answered by Lincoln himself opening the door. I doubt whether I wholly concealed my disappointment at meeting him. Tall, gaunt, ungainly, ill-clad, with a homeliness of manner that was unique in itself, I confess that my heart sank within me as I remembered that this was the man chosen by a great nation to become its ruler in the gravest period of its history. I remember his dress as if it were but yesterday—snuff-colored and slouchy pantaloons; open black vest, held by a few brass buttons; straight or evening-dress coat, with tightly fitting sleeves to exaggerate his long, bony arms; all supplemented by an awkwardness that was uncommon among men of intelligence. Such was the picture I met in the person of Abraham Lincoln. We sat down in his plainly furnished parlor and were uninterrupted during the nearly four hours I remained with him, and little by little, as his earnestness, sincerity and candor were developed in conversation, I forgot all the grotesque qualities which so confounded me when I first greeted him. Before half an hour had passed I learned not only to respect but, indeed, to reverence the man."

Seward found out about it soon after he became Secretary of State. He had thought he would be the real leader. His friends thought the same thing. You recall his letter in which he set down "Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration." He declared that the administration had no policy; that some one must take the leadership; that while he did not seek the job he would do the work if necessary. It did not take Lincoln long to let Seward know who was to be the master. Such a communication sent to some men would have been published; the writer would have been dismissed from service and perhaps forever disgraced.

Nothing speaks more eloquently of the greatness of Abraham Lincoln than the fact that the American people did not know of this communication, until, twenty-two years after his death, it was published as part of the story of his wonderful life. But all did know how faithfully Seward served Lincoln until the end, standing by his side and supporting him loyally in every movement where his help was sought.

It was harder to win the affection of Chase, bothered as he always was by the buzzing of the presidential bee about his head, and differing from Lincoln as he did by reason of his birth and education and manner of thought. But even he, too, came to feel the spell of mastery.

The hardest to subdue was Stanton, the great Secretary of War. His introduction to Lincoln had come under peculiar circumstances. It was at a celebrated trial of a McCormick reaper case in Cincinnati in which the two were counsel on the same side. Stanton afterwards recalled Lincoln as

“ . . . a long, lank creature from Illinois, wearing a dirty linen duster for a coat, on the back of which the perspiration had splotched wide stains that resembled a map of the continent.”

When the arrangement of the speeches was made, the more famous Stanton was assigned the part Lincoln had hoped to have, and the former indicated his feeling in the query:

“Where did that long-armed creature come from? What can he expect to do in this case?”

An Illinois man once suggested to President Lincoln that the Union cause might be greatly strengthened if the armies of the East could mingle with the armies of the West. The President referred his adviser to the War Secretary who inquired gruffly why he had come to him. “The President sent me.” “You

go back to him and tell him he is a damned fool!" But when the words were reported, the unexpected answer came, "Did Stanton say that? Well, Stanton usually is right. I guess it must be so."

Lincoln had learned that it never pays to quarrel. As he himself phrased it:

"No man resolved to make most of himself can spare time for personal contention. Still less can he afford to take all the consequences, including the vitiating of his temper and the loss of self-control. Yield larger things to which you can show no more than equal right and yield lesser though clearly your own. Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite."

It required patience and self-control to win over the impetuous head of the War Department who was often irritated by the President's orders, but when the sorrowing little group gathered in a darkened room one sad April day, it was Stanton, thoroughly conquered and subdued, who said:

"There lies the greatest master of men the world has ever seen."

The master won them all. He conquered his enemies, conquered everyone who opposed him, conquered the newspapers which had criticised him, and in his death drew from that Sir John Tenniel whose life has just ended an apology for the abuse he had heaped upon him in *Punch*.

"Yes he has lived to shame me from my sneer
To lame my pencil and confute my pen
To make me own this hind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter, a true-born King of men."

Conquering others, he finally conquered himself. One catches a glimpse of the workings of his mind as he pondered upon the problems of the war wonder-

ing, if there was a just God, why he did not give victory to the Union? It was in 1862 he wrote these words:

"The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true: that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere power on the minds of the now contestants, he could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began, and, having begun, he could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds."

But in March, 1865, when he delivered his second inaugural address, his thoughts found grander expression in the sublime and unequalled passage:

"Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purpose. 'Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.' If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove,

and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

We have thought for awhile together about this great American. We have followed him as, with infinite patience, he trained himself in body, in mind and in soul for mastery. Where better could we leave him, this master of men, than as he bows in submissive reverence before the Master of the Universe?

There have been many interpretations of the life and character of Abraham Lincoln. Among them all no summary is more suggestive, more comprehensive, than that furnished in a single long sentence from the classic utterance of Carl Schurz, written in review of Nicolay and Hay's "Abraham Lincoln: A History:"

"As the state of society in which Abraham Lincoln grew up passes away, the world will read with increasing wonder of the man, who, not only of the humblest origin, but remaining the simplest and most unpretending of citizens, was raised to a position of power unprecedented in our history; who was the gentlest and most peace-loving of mortals, unable to see any creature suffer without a pang in his own breast, and suddenly found himself called to conduct the greatest and bloodiest of our wars; who wielded the power of

government when stern resolution and relentless force were the order of the day, and then won and ruled the popular mind and heart by the tender sympathies of his nature; who was a cautious conservative by temperament and mental habit, and led the most sudden and sweeping revolution of our time; who, preserving his homely speech and rustic manner even in the most conspicuous position of that period, drew upon himself the scoffs of polite society, and then thrilled the soul of mankind with utterances of wonderful beauty and grandeur; who, in his heart the best friend of the defeated South, was murdered because a crazy fanatic took him for its most cruel enemy; who, while in power, was beyond measure lampooned and maligned by sectional passion and an excited party spirit, and around whose bier friend and foe gathered to praise him—which they have since never ceased to do—as one of the greatest of Americans and the best of men.”

“Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour.
But at length silence comes:
These are all gone, and standing, like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame;
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.”

